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GUIDE
TO
ILFRACOMBE

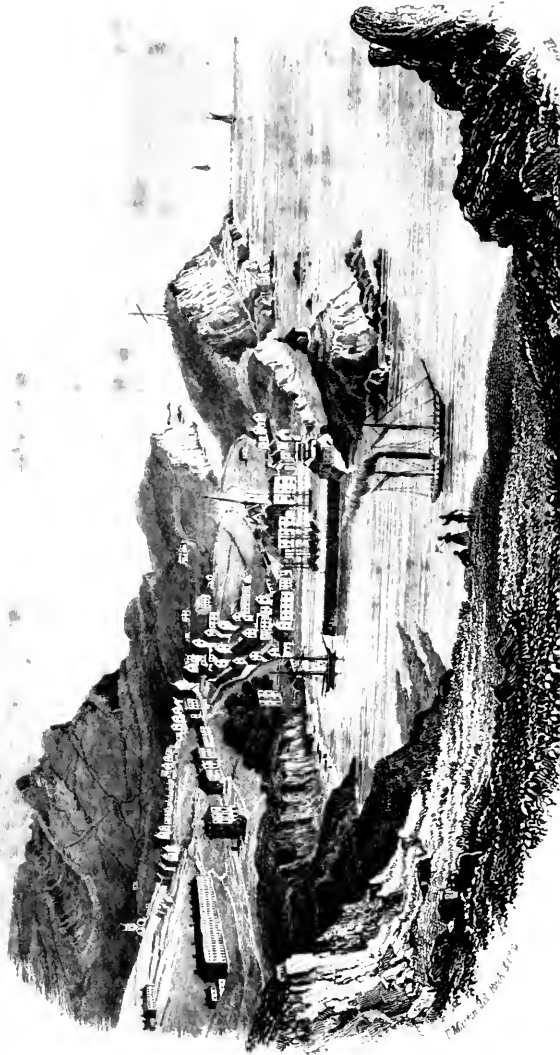


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Engraving of the Harbor of San Francisco, 1845

A GUIDE
TO
ILFRACOMBE
AND THE
NEIGHBOURHOOD ;
COMPREHENDING
A GENERAL SKETCH OF THE HISTORY AND
OBJECTS MOST WORTHY OF REMARK.

ILFRACOMBE :
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ADDRESS.



The following pages, respectfully addressed to the inhabitants of Ilfracombe, and its numerous visitors, are intended to assist in the recollection of, or form a guide to, the different objects most worthy of observation in the neighbourhood. And the author sincerely hopes, that sufficient information has been introduced, without extending the work beyond the limits of moderation, or entailing an unnecessary expense on the purchaser.



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— — Wollacombe Sands	1
— — Georgeham	5
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Branton to Westdown	4
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— — — — — (by the Road.	3
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BANKER.

NATIONAL PROVINCIAL BANK OF ENGLAND.—
Draw on London and Westminster Bank,
Lothbury.—H. Day, Esq., Manager.

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at Low water & Small
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A GUIDE TO ILFRACOMBE.



ILFRACOMBE,* Ilfridcombe, Alfrincombe,† is in the hundred of Braunton, situated on the North Coast of Devon, and derives the latter portion of its name from the British word *Kum*, signifying a Valley. This Manor, in Edward the Confessor's days, was in the tenure of one Robert, and guilded‡ at the rate of one hide§ and one farding|| of land, and at the time of

* By the Census of 1851, the population amounted to 3,654.

† Alfreincoma, *fol.* 301, *Exon Domesday*.

In Bishop Bronescombe's Register, *fol.* 49, the parish is called Hilfrincombe.

‡ A tribute or tax.—*Camden*.

§ A hyde or hide of land, computed to be as much as could be tilled after one plough in a year, is estimated at from 100 to 120 acres.

|| A farding of land is the fourth part of a yard of land, which is generally supposed to consist of twenty-four acres.

HENRY the Second, it belonged to the Lady Roise, wife of Sir Henry Champernon, knight, whose descendant, Richard, was progenitor of the Champernons of Modbury, in the South of Devon. Margaret, grand-daughter of the last Champernon of Ilfracombe, and daughter of William and Elizabeth Polglas, married Sir John Herle,* Knight ; and on the death of his son, Sir John, Lord chief Justice of the common pleas (4th Henry 6,) he conveyed the Champernon inheritance to William, Lord Bonville, whose son, Sir William, married Elizabeth, the daughter and heiress of William, Lord Harrington ; whose issue, William, married Catherine, daughter of Richard Nevil, Earl of Salisbury, and died leaving an only child, Cicely, wedded to Thomas Gray, Marquis of Dorset : and on the attainder of his son Henry (created Duke of Suffolk, 11th October, 15th EDWARD 6, 1450), the property went to the Crown. Henry's second wife was Lady Frances, daughter of the celebrated Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and Mary, daughter of HENRY the Seventh, and widow of Lewis the Twelfth, King

* He died at an advanced age at Champernon's Wike, or Combe, now Chambercombe, and was buried in the parish Church ; but no monumental record remains.

of France ; but in default of legal issue, this property descended to the heirs of Sir Charles Brandon, through whom it became possessed by the renowned Sir Philip Sidney. His daughter Elizabeth, married Roger Manners, fifth Earl of Rutland, about 1610, who conveyed the Manor of Ilfracombe to Sir Thomas Gorges, Knight. " He levied a fine of the same by the description of two Messuages, one cottage, three gardens, one hundred acres of land, forty acres of meadow, and forty or more acres of pasture."* The last Richard, Lord Gorges, and Baron of Dundalk, in the Kingdom of Ireland, gave by deed, bearing date 1686, to the vicar of Ilfracombe, vested in the hands of Trustees, " the high rent and reversion of the Ropers for ever ;" and the Manor, which was sold in parcels to various purchasers, still bears his name and title.

The Royal Manor and harbour of Ilfracombe, were in possession of the Martyns, Barons of Barnstaple, and from them, by the Audleighs, descended to the Bouchiers, Barons Fitz-Warine, and Earls of Bath, by whose munificence the pier was built, which, previous to the year 1730, extended eight hundred and fifty-

* From the King's remembrance Office in the Exchequer,—J. i. Rot. 162.

six feet in length.* As the violence of the sea had nearly destroyed it, an act was passed in the third of George the second, in 1730, for repairing the pier and enlarging the harbour, which was accomplished in 1760, by Sir Bouchier Wrey, Baronet. This event is commemorated by the following inscription :—

“This extensive Pier, built some years since, by the munificence of the Bouchiers, barons Fitz-Warine, earls of Bath, and Vice-Admirals of the place, was, in the year 1760, partly rebuilt, lengthened and enlarged, by Sir Bouchier Wrey, baronet, the present lord and inheritor of this pier and manor.” The last improvement was undertaken in consequence of the pier having sustained considerable damage in the year 1823, and the following inscription added ;

“A further enlargement of this pier was commenced by Sir Bouchier Wrey, Baronet,

* This Port (a member of Exeter) was returned into the Exchequer in Easter Term, twenty-ninth of CHARLES the Second as follows :—“The Haven Quay at Ilfracombe, measuring in length from the south-west end, against the House of David Bevan, to the furthestmost part north-east thereof, against the House of Widow White, about 200 feet; and from thence south to the Pier-head, about 216 feet, and in breadth about 16 feet between Bevan’s House and Widow White’s, and about 9 feet between Widow White’s and the Pier-head.

in the year 1824, and completed in the year 1829, by Sir Bouchier Palk Wrey, Baronet, the present lord of the manor."

Of the antiquity of this harbour the following particulars afford an interesting proof. In a list or roll of EDWARD the Third's fleet, taken A. D. 1346, Ilfracombe is described as having provided six vessels and ninety-six men; whereas the Mersey found but one vessel and five men. This circumstance presents a striking instance of the extraordinary change which a course of years has effected between Ilfracombe and Liverpool. Ilfracombe was also a place of some importance during the civil wars; for about September, 1644, "Sir Francis Doddington with his horse, fell upon Ilfercombe, a small sea port not far from Barnstaple, and took it, with 20 pieces of ordinance, as many barrels of powder, and near 200 arms. The gaining of this place much facilitated the re-possession of Barnstaple."*

In July, 1685, Colonel Wade, Ferguson, and forty or fifty others "seized a vessel at Ilfracombe, victualled her, and put to sea, but were forced ashore by two frigates." These persons were a part of the Duke of Monmouth's army,

* Sir E. Walker's Historical Discourses, p. 86.

who, after the battle of Sedgemoor, near Bridgewater, escaped to Minehead, where they were joined by a party of dragoons under the command of Captain Hewling, and proceeded thence to Ilfracombe as above stated. Colonel Wade was afterwards taken at Brendon, near Lynton, and ultimately pardoned. Robert Ferguson, a non-conformist, and an old republican, escaped to the continent, and returned to England with the Prince of Orange. Of the remainder, whose names are not preserved, many were afterwards executed.

The harbour is protected and kept in repair, by certain dues, payable on vessels taking refuge there. The anchorage is well secured, in almost every direction, by a natural boundary of rocks, ranged in a semicircular form. The surrounding scenery is of the most varied and romantic character.

LIGHT HOUSE.

Immediately above the harbour to the north, is an ancient building, which was formerly one of four chapels of ease existing in this parish, and dedicated to St. Nicholas, but is now converted into a light-house. This ancient chapel was in all probability a place of pilgrimage, for it is stated in Bishop Lacy's Register, vol. 3, Fol. 134, that His Lordship granted an indulgence of 40 days to all true penitents, who shall visit "Capellum Sancti Nicholai infra parochiam de Ilferdecombe causâ peregrinationis."*

From the Lantern to low water mark is one hundred and thirty-six feet.

The view from this hill is magnificent; the bold and inaccessible rocks, projecting far into the sea, protecting the base of the majestic Hillsborough, form a pleasing and romantic object to the east; while a hill called Capstone, to the west, invites the evening wanderer, to

* See note, page 18.

watch from its summit, the progress of departing day, and behold the gradually descending sun shed its last rays over the soft but tremulous bosom of the deep, and night draw its veil over nature's beauteous works.

THE TOWN.

The town formerly consisted of one long and irregular street about a mile in length, but, of late years, great additions and improvements have been made in commodious and beautifully situated houses and terraces, which have provided the principal accommodation for visitors. The views from Adelaide, Coronation, Hillsborough, and Montpelier terraces, are commanding and bold: in the centre of Coronation terrace, are public ball and billiard Rooms.

MARKET.

The Market is held on Saturday, it was granted by HENRY the Third, to Henry de Champernon, with a fair to be held on the first of the Holy Trinity; the former is well supplied with meat, vegetables, poultry, eggs, &c.

CLIMATE.

It has long been thought desirable that some more accurate account of the climate of Ilfracombe and the neighbourhood should be given, about which so many erroneous ideas are prevalent, and any scientific person who would kindly supply this *hiatus*, would confer a great service on its inhabitants, and especially to health-seeking visitors. In the absence, however, of more elaborate details the following sketch may not be unacceptable :—

The air of Ilfracombe, (which has not unfrequently been compared to that of Brighton,) is particularly genial, dry, and bracing; there are no exhalations of damp, the Schistose rock, of which it is chiefly formed, materially assisting in carrying off all moisture.

The mean annual temperature of Ilfracombe, from May 1849 to May 1850, was $50^{\circ} 40$, and from May 1850 to May 1851, was $51^{\circ} 5$. According to Dr. Shapter, in his "Climate of Devon," the mean annual temperature of Torquay is $51^{\circ} 65$, or only about half-a-degree warmer than Ilfracombe during the year, May 1850 to May 1851, a degree and a quarter

warmer than the year immediately preceding. These facts, it is hoped, will go far towards dissipating the too general belief that the air of Ilfracombe is *so very cold*.

The subjoined table* will show the mean

* NORTH ASPECT.

THERMOMETER.				BAROMETER.								
1850	Main	Tem.	Highest	Lowest	Main	Highest	Lowest					
May	51°	5	62°	5	39°	5	29°	47				
June	61		68	52	5	30	24	29	45			
July	61	5	66	56	5	29	85	30	13	29	70	
August	62		67	5	55	29	95	30	25	29	68	
Sep.	56		61	51	5	30	9	30	38	29	40	
Oct.	50		58	5	43	5	29	85	30	28	29	28
Nov.	49		56	35	5	30		30	22	29	4	
Dec.	44		51	38		30	10	30	45	29	18	
1851.												
January	45		54	39		29	60	33	15	28	74	
Feb.	45	5	49	5	36		29	75	30	32	29	31
March	45		51	38		29	80	30	30	28	75	
April	47	5	56	41	5	29	75	30	12	29	30	

The Mean Annual Temperature from May 1849 to May, 1850, was 50° 40. The Mean Annual Temperature from May 1850, to May 1851, was 51° 5. The Mean Annual Temperature of Torquay, according to Dr. Shapter's "Climate of Devon," is only (51° 65) about half a degree warmer than Ilfracombe; and the Mean *Winter* Temperature of Ilfracombe, (from December. 1850 to March 1851,) is 44° 75, or half a degree warmer than Torquay, and four degrees warmer than Exeter, according to Dr. Shapter. The difference of Temperature between the interior of the house, in a room, North aspect, without fire, and the open air, was nearly three degrees (at eight o'clock in the morning, during the month of March,) this was during the prevalence of North East winds.

temperature and variations for every month in the year, as well as the indications of the barometer for the same time. In the spring, during the prevalence of cold North East winds, from its very position, Ilfracombe, perhaps, would not be the most desirable residence for persons suffering from chest affections; but in what part of England have not invalids to suffer from the same? Although the greater number of lodging houses and private residences have a north aspect, there are several very advantageously situated in the valleys with a warm south aspect, that may well bear comparison with those in a more southern latitude. There geraniums and many delicate plants may be seen in flower, and thriving throughout the winter in the open garden. The myrtle and hydrangea also flourishes and flowers in great perfection, in many situations in and about Ilfracombe.

Whilst speaking of the salubrity of Ilfracombe, it may not be amiss to state that, by the returns of the Registrar General the number of deaths are only 15 in a 1000, or one and a half per cent., in few places can so low an estimate be found. Monumental inscriptions in the parish church-yard bear ample testimony to

the longevity of many of the inhabitants : a stone with the following records may be seen at the south-east corner of the church :—

“THE FOUR UNDERMENTIONED
CENTENARIANS,
LIVED AND DIED IN THIS PARISH,
AND THEIR REMAINS
ARE DEPOSITED IN THIS CHURCH YARD.
JOHN PILE DIED

17 MAY, 1784, AGED 100 YEARS,
SARAH WILLIAMS, WIDOW,
(WHOSE MAIDEN NAME WAS LORD)
DIED 13 JAN., 1788, AGED 107 YEARS.

WILLIAM SOAPER DIED
6 NOV., 1804, AGED 103 YEARS.
JOHN DAVIS DIED
4 MARCH, 1840, AGED 102 YEARS.”

When the improved system of drainage and other sanitary works now in progress, are completed, it is hoped a more favourable report may yet be made. Neither will it be out of place to allude to the water about to be introduced into the town for the use of the inhabitants, which has been analysed by Dr. Lyon Playfair, and reported by him to be of the purest and most healthful quality, and to contain only 3·1 degrees of hardness.

Frost and snow are of rare occurrence, and seldom of any severity or long continuance.

Rain fell 145 days during the year 1850, and 172 days in 1851, which, by comparison with other parts of the kingdom, will be found below the usual average.

LIBRARY.

BANFIELD'S Library was established in 1823, and contains a well selected collection of upwards of 3000 Volumes, to which are added the most Popular Works and leading Periodicals of the day. A great variety of Lithographic Views and a Geological map of the neighbourhood have been published by him, and are worthy of notice. Here also is the Stamp Office and Savings' Bank.

READING ROOM.

The Reading Room is at Banfield's Library, where a comfortable and commodious room has been fitted up for the purpose, containing a liberal supply of papers and periodicals, Navy and Army lists, &c. It is open to both Ladies and Gentlemen ; and subscriptions by the week, month, or year, which are moderate, may comprehend both the Library and Reading Room.

BATHS.

In 1836 some excellent hot and cold Baths were erected near the centre of the town, which are constructed on a good principle, and capable of affording comfort and accommodation. The building itself is ornamental and advantageously situated, and the ground around it is well calculated for dwelling houses. Tunnels lead from the Baths to the beaches, which, while they provide the means of secluded sea bathing, afford an admirable communication with some of the finest rock scenery in the neighbourhood.

SHOPS, INNS, &c.

The Shops are good, and families may readily be supplied with every requisite.

The principal Inns are the Clarence, Britannia, and Packet Hotels ; the former is situated at the upper, and the two last at the lower end of the town.

Post Chaises, Cars, and Saddle Horses are easily procured at the Inns or Livery Stables. In addition to which there are Coaches and

Omnibuses daily, between Ilfracombe and Barnstaple.

Sedans, Bath Chairs, and Donkeys, are to be hired in many parts of the town.

PACKETS.

Steam Packets ply between Ilfracombe and Bristol throughout the year, and Ilfracombe and Swansea, from May to October. The Cornish and Bideford Steamers call on their passage to and from Bristol.

Any information respecting their time of sailing may be obtained at the Britannia, Clarence, and Packet Hotels; or at Banfield's Library.

THE COTTAGE GARDEN SOCIETY.

This excellent society was formed in 1837, for the purpose of bettering the condition of the working classes,* by holding out rewards for industry, prudence, forethought, and cleanliness; at the same time improving the garden

* The sum of £380 has been expended in prizes; and George Norman, one of the cottagers at Combmartin, has gained as many as 373 prizes, amounting in all to £36 16s. 6d., besides numerous garden implements.

produce of the cottager ; under the management of a committee, selected from subscribers, with the clergymen of the several parishes embraced, viz., Ilfracombe, Berrynarbor, Combmartin, Westdown, and Morthoe, (being ex-officio members,) assisted by the present honorary secretary, John Barnard Turner, Esq. ;* its success, in a moral and religious point of view, has also been most encouraging. All persons cultivating their gardens by themselves and children, without the assistance of any other person, and not gaining more than fifteen shillings a week by their labour, or from other sources, are eligible to become exhibiting members, when approved by the committee and registered. Two Exhibitions are held annually in June or July, and September, of which due notice is given ; the rules and prize lists, with the treasurer's account, are distributed amongst the members of the society and cottagers, and may be had of the honorary secretary, or at Banfield's library ; where subscriptions and donations are received, and the audited accounts, with the vouchers left for inspection.

* This gentleman was presented by the subscribers in 1848, with a handsome silver inkstand, in token of his exertions on behalf of the society.

THE CHURCH.

The church is an ancient structure, situated on an eminence at the extreme end of the Town, and nearly surrounded by hills of considerable height, which protect the sacred edifice from the violence of the north-west and south-west winds.

“At a very early period, the Champernon family had obtained the patronage of this church, which is dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Dependant on its Rectory were four chapels of ease, within the parish; one at Westcombe, dedicated also to the Holy Trinity; another at West Hagginton, commonly called West Heanton, dedicated to our Lady, (very probably that to which allusion is made in Risdon’s survey of Devon, as having been situated in the church yard,” and consecrated to the honour of the Lady of Thorn;) a third, “*Sancti Nicholai supra Portum maris*,” now converted into the light house, before men-

tioned;”* and fourth, the chapel “Sancte Wardrede, apud Legh,” the site of which still bears the name of the Sanctuary. “The noble family above mentioned had also their Oratory at Champernounsheys,” or Chambercombe.†

The church (which has of late been much restored) consists of a nave, a chancel, and north and south aisles. The tower is situated in the centre of the north aisle, a position rather unusual, at least in the western counties. The windows are perpendicular in their tracery, which Rickman fixes on as the fourth or last division of the Gothic style, a form much adopted during the middle of the fourteenth century. The clustered pillars near the pulpit

* It is perfectly clear from Veysey's Register, vol. 2, fol. 13, (14th April 1522) that St. Nicholas's chapel was used then as a light house. “In capella St. Nicholai super Portum Ville de Ilfracombe fundata, *Luminare* quoddam singulis annis per totam hiemen nocturnis temporibus in summitate dicte capelle ardens, velut *Stella* nocte choruseans invenitur.” The Bishop states that it eminently contributed to the preservation of human life, by guiding vessels in the midst of storms and tempests into a port of safety; and as the means of the inhabitants were insufficient to continue the maintenance of such light for the public good, his lordship invites the faithful to assist by offering to all true penitents an indulgence of 40 days, “qui ad dicti Luminis sustentationem manus porrexerint adiutrices.” See page 7.

† Lacey's Register, fol. 187, vol. 3.

and centre of the church are of older date, probably marking the transition from the decorated to the perpendicular style. In the south wall of the chancel is a Piscina, or water drain, and until within the last ten years there were also sedilia or stalls, for the three orders of the ministry, priest, deacon, and sub-deacon. They were of handsome Gothic architecture, and their removal is much to be regretted. The font appears to be the oldest relic in the church, being in the Saxon style, or as they are called "Norman Fonts." The Tower which is 58 feet, 6 inches high, is all that most probably remains of an earlier building. The panel work in the centre aisle, where the screen was formerly situated, is rather rich, and from this part may evidently be traced the extension of the church, which took place about 1322; for it is remarked in the Ecclesiastical Antiquities in Devon, that "Bishop Stapledon, in his visitation of the parish church, 22nd Nov., 1321, pointed out to the Patron, Sir Henry Champernon, Knight, and to others of the parishioners, that the edifice was utterly inadequate to contain the population. He therefore commanded them to enlarge it by extending the nave at least 24 feet,

and lengthening the aisles on both sides, which he required should be executed in two years, under a penalty of forty pounds. By measurement, the inside length of the Fabric is one hundred and thirteen feet, and sixty-one feet three inches in breadth.

The church contains several monuments, one of which is erected to the memory of Captain Richard Bowen, R. N., who fell at the unfortunate attempt on Teneriffe under the command of Sir Horatio Nelson.

In Westcote's time the following memorial existed, which has now, I believe, disappeared ;
"Hic jacet corpus Elizabethæ Basset quondam uxoris Johannis Basset, quæ obiit 24^o die Junii A. D. 1419. Cujus animæ propitiatur Deus in æternum."

In the church-yard, was formerly a chapel, consecrated to the honor of the Lady of Thorn, to which allusion has already been made in page 17 ; *"as they give out,"* says Risdon,* *"now almost demolished."*

It appears by a paper preserved in the Augmentation Office, under the head of Ilfracombe, that a Chantrye formerly existed *"in y^e paryshe church there."*

* Risdon wrote in 1630, page 346.

“ The yerlye value of y^e land £LXX IXs. iiijd.”
Possibly this may be the chapel alluded to.

Among the historical notices in Oliver’s Ecclesiastical Antiquities,* we find the following list of Incumbents, the first of whom was *Henry de Monte Forti*, who was admitted on Friday in Whitsun week, 1272, on the presentation of Henry de Campo Arnulphi (Champernon).

Solomon de Rof, admitted on Christmas day, 1276. He had previously been collated by Bishop Bronescombe, to a Canonry in St. Carantock’s Collegiate Church, Cornwall. Subsequently he became “ Justitiarius domini Regis.”

Reginald de Champernoun, the date of whose institution is not recorded. I meet with him as Rector 11th May, 1310, and as a Canon of Exeter Cathedral. He must have lived to an advanced age.

John de Champernoun succeeded 13th August, 1333. Pat. Sir William de Champernoun, Knt. From fol. 36, vol. 2, of Grandisson’s Register, we collect, that this Rector found his Parsonage House and Premises in a very dilapidated state, and had incurred considerable expense in repairs and improvements.

* See vol. 2, page 135.

John de Lester, admitted 12th December, 1335. Pat. do.

William Best followed 24th March, 1348-49. Pat. do.

William Polgrum, or *Polgrime*, succeeded 12th January, 1361-2. Pat. "hac vice William Polglas ratione Elizabet uxoris sue alterius coheredis Willielmi Champernoune."

Thomas Barton, a Canon of Exeter Cathedral, occurs Rector 15th January, 1382, in fol. 103, vol. 1, of Brantyngham's Register. In fol. 205, of the same vol., is the monition of this Bishop, dated 18th of April, 1390, directed to certain Parishioners, who had presumed to bury within the Church the corpse of one Thomas Fisher, in defiance of this Rector's remonstrance. For some time a bad feeling and spirit of opposition to legitimate authority had prevailed in the Parish. His Lordship had been compelled on 18th of January, six years before this, to interdict the unseemly practice of holding Fairs "in Cemeterio de Ilfridcombe," and in the early part of the summer of 1385, he had denounced certain riotous persons, who had polluted the Church-yard with the effusion of human blood. This Rector made his will, 27th June, 1415, which was proved 31st March following.

Hugh Herle, succeeded 28th March, 1416. Patron Sir John Herle, Knight,* on institution, he complained of the "delapidated state in which the Rectory had been left by his wealthy predecessor."

"*John Morton* occurs Rector the 24th May, 1439, when he was authorised by Bishop Lacy to perform Divine Service in the chapels of the Holy Trinity, St. Mary, St. Nicholas, and St. Wardred, and in the chapel of the Patron within the parish of Ilfracombe."

He made his will 9th of September, 1457. leaving £2 13s. 4d. to 16 of the poorest women of his parish in child bed, viz. 3s. 4d. to each. "His books, entitled *Aurea Legenda* and *Pupilla Oculi*, he desired may be chained within the chancel of the Parish Church to remain there for ever, for the use of his successors."

It is perhaps needless to observe, that these books have long since disappeared.

John Cody, succeeded 15th December, 1459, on Morton's death. Pat. Sir William Bonville, de Cherton, Knight.

William Chauntre, admitted 17th April, 1470. Pat. William Hastings, Lord de Hastings. By his Patron's consent he exchanged for the Archdeaconary of Derby, with

* See page 2.

John Bryde, 1st June, 1473.

Robert Spycer was admitted 4th May, 1474. Patron *hâc vice*, John Montgomery, of London, Yeoman.

Richard Norton succeeded 22nd April, 1492. Patron, Thomas Marquis of Dorset. He subsequently became Archdeacon of Barum, and Precentor of Exeter Cathedral.

George Gray, admitted 17th March, 1523-4, on the death of Norton, "*famosissimi doctoris*," on the presentation of Cecilia, Marchioness of Dorset, Countess of Wiltshire, Lady Haryngton and Bonville.

Thomas Brerwode, L.L.D., was preferred to this living the 7th of December, 1530, on the presentation of Henry the eighth.* He was a great pluralist, being, at the same time, Archdeacon of Barum, Rector of Ilfracombe, Vicar of Colyton and Colcombe Chantry, Rector of St. Ewe, Prebend of Ridge, Crediton, Prebend of Exeter Cathedral, and Rector of Bradninch.†

George Carew, the King's Chaplain, succeeded 4th of September, 1544, on the death of Brerwode. Patron Henry the eighth.

* The Rectory was valued in 1535, at £50 4s. 3d. per annum.

† Oliver's Ecclesiastical Antiquities, vol. 2, page 20.

To say the least, this Royal Chaplain, (Father, in the sequel, to George Carew, Earl of Totness, and Sir Peter Carew,) was even a greater pluralist than his predecessor Brerwode. He was a Canon in Exeter Cathedral, was Archdeacon of Totness, became Precentor of Exeter, was Archdeacon of Exeter (which office he resigned in 1569 for a pension of £20 per annum), became Dean of Exeter in 1570. He was also Canon in Crediton Church, had the free Chapel of Otter Mohun, the Vicarage of Brixham, and the Rectories of Stoke Flemyng, of East Allyngton, and of Lydford. He subsequently obtained the Deaneries of Bristol, of Christ Church, Oxford, and of Windsor, and the Precentorship of Salisbury.

It appears that Carew resigned the vicarage of Ilfracombe, in 1555, on being collated the 1st Prebend of Ilfracombe by Bishop Turbeville, 10th of July in that year. This must have been the first appointment, after the Church of Salisbury had possession of that Prebendal stall. He was replaced in the vicarage by Geoffrey Clepit, but soon after we find George Carew again in possession.*

* Sir John Down, the Curate of Ilfracombe, made his will 10th of January, 1580. He desired to be buried in the chancel "between the Quyer doves and the organs."—*Oliver*, vol. 3, addenda, page 106.

William Slatyer, admitted 25th of July, 1583, "ad Vicariam perpetuam de Ilfracombe noviter erectam, per mortem Georgii Carew, clerici ultimi incumbentis vacantem." Patron Thomas Hyde, Prebendary. "Prebende de Ilfracombe nuperrime fundate in Ecclesia, B. V., Marie Sarum."

John Morys, admitted 27th October, 1584, on the cession of Slatyer. Patron the Prebendary aforesaid.

William Buckland, admitted 25th April, 1621, on the resignation of Morys; patron (hac vice) Bartholomew Parr, Clerk, Rector of Clist St. Mary, by reason of the advowson granted to him by the celebrated historian William Camden,* who, though a layman, was Prebendary of

* It appears that this distinguished man made a "journey to Ilfracombe, in Devonshire, in 1588, to obtain more knowledge in the Antiquities of that County, and elsewhere, for the next Edition of his *Britannia*," but there is no certain information of his having visited Ilfracombe after he became Prebend. Sufficient evidence, however, exists in his own published correspondence to justify a belief that he did visit that neighbourhood at a later period; for in a letter addressed to him by Dr. Henry or William Bouchier, he says, "In the time of my being in Devonshire with my honorable kinsman the Earl of Bath, I was sometime, by my letters, troublesome unto you, as I was often with myself, when I was there with you." This letter was written from Ireland; and although it bears no date, that which precedes it, from the same hand, was written from Dublin 15th of February, 1618.

Ilfracombe on the collation of his friend Dr. John Piers, Bishop of Sarum, February 6th 1589, which Prebendship he held to the period of his death, November 9th, 1628.

Willam Buckland resigned the very day of his admission, and

John Morys, junior, was admitted 25th April, 1621, on the presentation of the same patron.*

John Morrice, admitted 26th July, 1622. Patron hâc vice K. James I.

Robert Liverland, admitted 17th July, 1633. Patron Nicholas Andrews, Prebendary of Sarum. On whose cession,

John Read, succeeded 28th of April, 1636. Patron hâc vice John Hayne, of Exeter, Merchant, by virtue of the grant thereof, by the Prebendary Nicholas Andrew, to James Blayne, Clerk, and by him assigned to John Hayne, aforesaid. He was serving this church in 1648.

Leonard Prince,† on whose privation,

Alexander Atkey, was admitted Vicar 13th January, 1662-3, on the presentation of Jere-

* The Terrier of the Glebe Lands and Tithes, and Houses belonging to the Prebend of Ilfracombe, dated 21st of May, 1613, is still extant.

† Q. Is this the person buried at Instow, 1696, æt. 73?

miah Stephens, Prebendary of Sarum. He died 8th of October, 1683, æt. 48.

Allen Lester, succeeded on 27th February, after Atkey's death, on the presentation of the Prebendary, Daniel Blithe. He died intestate, and administration was granted to his brother, George Lester, 25th September, 1686.

Thomas Roe, succeeded him, 23rd November, 1689.

William Read, was admitted Vicar, 15th November following, on the presentation of Prebendary John Byron.

John Elmeston, admitted 8th June, 1691. Patron the Prebendary of Sarum, John Byron. This Vicar was buried 23rd June, 1724.

Nathaniel Collier, followed 26th September, 1724, on the presentation of the Prebendary, Martin Benson. On whose resignation,

Thomas Stinton, admitted 18th April, 1728. Patron Prebendary Dennis Payne. This Vicar's Terrier of the Parsonage and Glebe, is dated 1st May, 1745.*

* It states that there is an Orchard and two little Meadows belonging to the Vicar, of about three acres, adjoining the Parsonage, and that there is a stipend of £33 6s. 8d. paid to the Vicar, by the impropriators of the great tithes *in lieu* of all tithes and payments, and that Alexander Atkey had given a tenement, situate in the

John Bailey, admitted 6th December, 1762. Patron Prebendary William Hillman. On whose resignation,

John Vye, admitted 25th May, 1770. Pat. said William Hillman. On whose cession,

Emmanuel May, admitted 29th January, 1771. Pat. said William Hillman. This Vicar was buried 23rd February, 1804.

Robert Dickenson, admitted 7th May, 1804. Pat. Charles Guiffardiere, Prebendary of Sarum. This Vicar was buried 23rd February, 1836.

John Mill Chanter, admitted 22nd April, 1836, on the presentation of the Prebendary William Fisher.

The parish register commences in 1567, and was copied in black letter from more ancient records into the present book, by George Milton, Vicar of Ilfracombe, in 1602.

From the year 1653, to 1660, inclusive, marriages are thus entered; "the contract of marriage between Henry Parmynter and Mary the daughter of Nicholas Somers, published the 21st of February and two Lord's days next after, and married by Mr. Thomas Matthews, at Barnstaple, the 26th of September, 1654."

Borough, for the benefit of the Minister for ever, out of which is paid a yearly high rent of 4s. 8d. This Vicar was buried 27th August, 1762.

The act under which this alteration took place is dated 1653, establishing in every parish a register of marriages, births, and burials, to be chosen by the inhabitant house-holders, and allowing marriages to be solemnized before justices of the peace, and by a simple declaration of the parties, that they took each other for husband and wife. The common-wealth law of marriage therefore may be considered as the same in principle with that established by an act passed for the relief of dissenters in 1836.

In 1644, August the 21st, seven persons are inserted in the register of deaths, having this note opposite each name, "Slain in fight, 20th day,"—without any mention being made of place or circumstance; but there is a tradition of a battle having been fought on Swinedown, half way between Barnstaple and Ilfracombe, on the old road, between the King's army and the Presbyterian troops; the most probable conclusion however is, that they were killed at the siege of Ilfracombe, before mentioned, and the date agrees with the period of attack.*

The register also contains about thirty entries of the following description, "Hester, as she is called, daughter of Thomas Harris, and

* See page 5.

Hester, his wife, is reported to be baptized according to the method of the Presbyterians, April the nineteenth, 1729,

The parsonage is only a short distance from the church. In its kitchen (an old and curious room) were formerly the arms of the principal families, who have been at different periods connected with Ilfracombe ; * which is imagined to be all that remains of the old house, as it appears the front was built about eighty or ninety years since.†

SCHOOLS.

For the extension of education among the poorer inhabitants of Ilfracombe, founded on the principles and practice of the Church of England, there is a school for boys, in the centre of the town, and one for girls adjoining the

* This room was doubtless built by the Duke of Suffolk, or one of his descendants, as the arms are those generally connected with his family. They have been removed within the last few years.

† Nathaniel Collier, Vicar of Ilfracombe, about 1726, was allowed by Bishop Stephen Weston to demolish the west front of the Vicarage house, and to build it on a smaller scale, taking down 18 feet of a barn which fronted the said Vicarage.

church.* A Sunday School is held in the one adjoining the church, and a daily one has been recently formed at Hele, the whole being conducted on Bell's National System. These schools are under the direction and management of the vicar, curates, and a committee, and are dependent on contributions for their support. The average number receiving instruction is about 300.

NEW CHURCH.

ST. PHILIP AND ST. JAMES.

Increased church accommodation being much required in this parish, on the first of May, 1851, being the festival of St. Philip and St. James, the foundation stone of a new church was laid, near to the Roper's-path, at the lower and most thickly populated part of the town; and, as the building progresses, it develops a chaste and beautiful structure, of the decorated style of architecture, under the design of the architect, Mr. Hayward, of Exeter.

* An eligible site near the church has lately been purchased, on which it is intended to build new schools, with a residence for the master and mistress, as soon as the necessary funds can be raised; in aid of which contributions will thankfully be received by the vicar or church-wardens.

The funds hitherto have been raised almost entirely by voluntary contributions, through the offertory. It is estimated to cost from four to five thousand pounds: and to seat about six hundred persons, one third of which will be free.*

DISSENTERS.

There is a respectable body of dissenters. The free Church is in Portland-street; Independent Chapel High-street; Wesleyan Chapel near James'-place; a congregation of the Plymouth Brethren meet in a large room at No. 53, Fore-street; and the Baptists at No. 12, Portland-street.

A daily School was established in 1840, on the principles of the British and Foreign School Society. It is supported by voluntary contributions, and is held in the room attached to the Independent Chapel. In this School the Scriptures are taught, but no religious formularies are observed: children of all denominations are readily received.

* The late N. V. Lee, Esq., left the sum of six hundred pounds to trustees for the benefit of this church; the interest to be applied to the building fund, until it was completed, and ever after towards the endowment.

WALKS IN AND ABOUT ILFRACOMBE.

The Public Walks in the immediate vicinity of the town, are the Quay-fields and Coronation Terrace; the Lantern-hill and Warp-house-point; the Rope-walk and Wildersmouth; and from thence, by the walk around Capstone, which forms a beautiful sea-side promenade of considerable extent. From Wildersmouth also a pleasing sheltered walk, generally called the "Church-path," leads to the Baths and Tunnels, and has the hills called the Runna-cleaves on the right. Of these walks, it is but justice to observe, that they, generally speaking, command bold, rocky, and extensive views of the sea, which are bounded on the east by Hillsborough and Rillage-point, on the west by Bull-point and Lundy Island, and on the north by the Welsh coast, which is seen in clear weather.

Of the walks a short distance from Ilfracombe, much may be said; suffice it, however, to observe, that the rock scenery, in beauty, extent, and variety, equals any in the West of

England; while the valleys, many of which are richly wooded, form a pleasing contrast to nature's bolder works.

In an attempt, however feeble, to guide the stranger through the various rambles round Ilfracombe, it will be as well to commence with the rocky path from Wildersmouth to Crewkhorne. In undertaking this walk, care should be taken that the tide was sufficiently receded, and persons to whom scrambling is objectionable will find an easier way by the North-field, past the public Baths, and through the Tunnels.

The view from the north side of the Tunnel is one of peculiar interest, and cannot fail to please the observer.—Crewkhorne is a cave of considerable extent, and has been much admired for the bold and commanding position of the rocks around; the detached masses in front, by their picturesque forms, add to the interest of the scene, whilst to Conchologists the beaches possess an additional attraction, in the many shells found there. Further to the west, by the rocks, is a large vein of Arragonite,* which is

* The situation of the largest body of Arragonite, which is to be found both east and west of Ilfracombe, is immediately beyond an open straud on the left, near a winding path leading to the Tors.

approached by a rugged walk, winding among the rocks and masses of stone which are spread around, and terminating in a zig-zag path to the Tors. The communication to this interesting walk from the town, is by a lane below the church leading to the north, whence, after passing a small stream, a path will be observed on the right conducting to the highest point of the Tors, from whence a walk is made to the eastern end.* From this path three digressions should be observed; one from a neck of land called Tor-point, to White Pebble-bay, another to Tor-head, and a third to the Lover's-leap, and some remarkably fine rock scenery, which appears to particular advantage from a small portion of land, bearing the appellation of Greenaway's-foot.

Slade Lane, south from the church, affords at all times a dry and pleasant walk, and is the old carriage road to Morthoe or Morte. About half-a-mile from the church are two hills, right and left. The first is Langley-cleve, before mentioned, and the second Carn-top. The

* As the Tors are private property, cards of admission must be procured at the cottage in the lane below the church; and, as various accidents and severe losses have been sustained from sheep having been driven over the cliffs, persons are earnestly requested not to take dogs.

access to the latter is difficult, but the view from its summit will be much admired.

Lee Lane is west from the church, and, as before mentioned, leads to Langley-cleve; a commanding spot, the view from which is delightful. After a walk of about a mile, you reach Langley-open, where a new and commanding sea-view unfolds itself, differing in character from other parts of the neighbourhood.

Passing to the east of Montpelier Terrace, a road leads to a small castellated building, commanding extensive and fine views of the town, harbour, &c.

A path to the eastward, through the Quay-fields, leads to Hele; and continuing by the cliff road to Watermouth and Combmartin, forms one of the most beautiful walks in the neighbourhood. On quitting the field-path, the lane to the left will lead to Hillsborough, or Elsborrow, its more ancient name; which rises 447 feet above the level of the sea. By ascending to the top, whence the view is peculiarly fine, the stranger may observe the remains of a hill fortress: it has a double row of entrenchments, enclosing from fifteen to twenty acres of land. The outer bank is parallel with the

inner agger, or vallum, until it approaches its south-east entrance, when the outer vallum takes a direction at nearly right angles with its original form.

The opinions of writers have differed on the probable date and origin of these entrenchments, attributing their formation by turns to the Britons, and Romans. It appears, however, more than probable that this hill-fort was the work of the Britons, as the Romans are not believed to have penetrated so far to the south-west. Indeed more than one half the encampments, ascribed to the latter, have resulted from the labours of others, and "Julius Cæsar's camp," or "Roman camp," is the too common appellation of every fortification or earthwork scattered over the country.

On descending towards Hele and continuing his walk eastward, the tourist should not omit to notice the scenery in the neighbourhood of Rillage point. The lofty and precipitous cliffs, and insulated rocks of every form and size, here and there diversified by ridges extending into the sea, combine to present a scene of wild magnificence by no means of common occurrence. It is best seen from the beach below, which may be attained by a winding path diverging

from the cliff-walk, near the Hockey-gate, between Hele-strand and Watermouth; but care should be taken that the tide is far out.

Another object of interest will be found in two very extensive caves, situated to the east of a green slope in a line with Rillage-point, and approached by a steep path which leads to the rocks below; but they are only to be approached, from the land, at low water.

Watermouth, the property of Arthur Davie Bassett, Esq., possesses great attractions. The castellated mansion is situated on an eminence commanding a pleasing view of the inlet below, and from its picturesque appearance, adds materially to the interest of the scene, and cannot fail to extort the admiration of the tourist.

No visitor ought to leave this neighbourhood without seeing Smallmouth, the approach to which is by a short deviation from the path after passing Watermouth House. Notwithstanding the many beautiful scenes near Ilfracombe, we will venture to assert that the lover of nature will find this surpassed by none. The stranger descends between two lofty perpendicular cliffs, and when he has nearly reached the retreating wave, for it can only be viewed at low water, a small cove appears on his right,

apparently closed in on every side by lofty rocks similar to those that he has just passed between. Persons, indeed, insufficiently instructed, have actually retraced their steps, believing they could penetrate no further; a few steps, however, into the cove, and a view, which the pen can but inadequately describe, bursts suddenly upon the sight. In front appears a majestic arch of natural formation, through which are seen massive and rugged rocks; further off is Combmartin bay, and the hills called the Hangman form an appropriate back ground and finish the beauty of the picture.

On the left hand of the same cove a long and narrow fissure in the rock admits the visitor into another cavern, partly open to the sky, but arched at each end. Seaward he looks through the arch, across the bay just mentioned; landward he makes his way into a most romantic chasm or pit draped with brambles, ivy, and other plants, whence a winding path leads up to the earth above.

The walk to *Chambercombe*, or Champernon's Combe or Whike, as it was originally called, from having belonged to the Champernons, is among the most pleasing about Ilfracombe: its approach is by the walk described to

Hillsborough ; gain the road and enter a field to the right, through which there is a path, and the view of Chambercombe, the tranquil vale before you, is striking and beautiful.

DRIVES AND EXCURSIONS.

In addition to the interesting and romantic scenery which nature has spread around the Town of Ilfracombe, its neighbourhood may justly claim some share of that praise which is bestowed on the North of Devon. Many of the hills are beautifully wooded, and rich and luxuriant meadows, range through the vales below. The little rivulet glides cheerfully along, while ever and anon a rustic cottage rears its peaceful head.

LEE.

One of the most delightful rides from Ilfracombe, is to Lec, where the tranquillity of the vale forms a striking contrast to the sea and rock scenery. From the hill opposite, the view is magnificent, and every object appears placed to be admired. The road leads to Morthoe, passing a farm called Damage, but as it may

be intricate in some respects, directions should be procured at Lee. The proper carriage road is by Slade,* before mentioned, but that by Langley-open, as a bridle-path, is much to be preferred, and is, in summer, passable for carriages, although the hills are bad. In 1836, a chapel of ease was erected at Lee, through the exertions of Z. H. Drake, Esq., of Springfield, on whose land it was built. From the beauty of the situation, and simplicity, yet taste displayed in the elevation, it forms an object of considerable interest, and is on the road from Slade.

MORTHOE.

Morthoe, or Morte, as it is commonly called, is situated in a cold bleak district commanding a view of the extensive bay which bears its name. It was formerly the property of Hugh Vaultort: but afterwards became the inheritance of the Tracys, Barons of Barnstaple.†

* The manor of Lincombe, here situated, once belonged to the Abbey of Dunkeswell, near Collumpton.

Near Slade is a farm called Whit or Whitestone, deriving its name from a very large quartz rock in the middle of one of the fields close to the road.

† In the reign of Edward III. this property was in possession of Sir John Stowford, of Stowford, in West-

In Henry the third's time, William, Lord Hardeshull, with the consent of Matilda his wife, granted Matthew de Boston all his lands in Morte; and Robert Beaple conveyed to Sir William de Tracy, patron of the church, and son of Oliver Lord Tracy, of Woollacombe Tracy, certain lands in the parish of Westdown, called Cheglinch (33 Edward the first). This is, doubtless, the Ecclesiastic alluded to in "Prynus's papal usurpations," as follows; "Rex. Edw. I. An. 25 requis: de Mortho, etc. Ricardus de Sparkwyll de Comitatu, Devon, recogn: et oblig: the 11 egi pro Wilhelmo de Tracy persona Ecclesie de Mortho Exon."

The church is an old building, and chiefly of the perpendicular style of architecture. The seats, formerly open sittings, are in great part of richly carved oak, emblematic of our Saviour's betrayal and death, but they are not in good preservation. On the south side of the church is a transept, or projecting chapel, containing

down parish, whose Feoffees, 18th of the same reign, conveyed this among other lands, to William Fitz-Warren of Brightly, in the parish of Chittlehampton, and Jane his wife, daughter of Sir John above named.

Over or nether Woollacombe, lying in this parish, has remained, until lately, in possession of the Woollacombe family since the reign of King John. Hence Woollacombe sands.

an ancient Tomb, generally said to be that of Sir William de Tracy, one of the murderers of Thomas-a-Becket, Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, in 1170. The lid is of black Marble. On it is an effigy rudely traced, representing a Priest in full canonicals ; his hands are raised supporting a chalice on his breast. Around it is a fragment of an inscription in early Norman characters "SYRE WILLIAME DE TRACE—DIEU DE SA ALME EYT MERCY."—(Sir William de Trace. God on his soul have mercy.)—The base of the tomb is apparently of free-stone, and by no means so ancient as the black marble cover (which is of an earlier date than 1200,) a fact made evident by the perpendicular and decorated tracery of the Gothic windows sculptured on it. It has also three Shields, bearing first three Lions passant gardant, possibly for Carew ; the middle shield has on it, "Or, two bars, Gules, for de Tracy ;" and that on the right hand bears a saltire, charged with five pellets.*

That this tomb belongs to de Tracy, one of the murderers of Becket, is much doubted, but rather supposed to be that of a Rector of Morte.

* First, arms of England ; second, of Tracey ; and third of his wife.

Neither was it unusual, before the Reformation, for Ecclesiastics to have the title of "Syre," or "Sir," being a translation of "Dominus," the old style of B. A. at Oxford and Cambridge, and denoting one who had taken a degree there.

It is stated also by Giraldus Cambrensis, page 426, Vol. 2. *Anglia Sacra*, "that Sir William was the principal of the four murderers, and that immediately after the act, he hurried down to Bartholomew, Bishop of Exeter, in whose diocese he had considerable estates. Within three years after the bloody deed, Sir William died at Cogenza in Calabria, with every sentiment of unfeigned repentance."

"The tomb in Morthoe Church," says the author of the *Ecclesiastical Antiquities in Devon*, "was not erected to this knight, but to the priest and rector of that name who founded the chantry, and dying 1322, was succeeded, the sixteenth of December of that year, by Thomas Roberts." See Fo. 171, Reg. Stapeldon. In the fabric Roll of Exeter Cathedral, A. D. 1323, I find a donation of twenty shillings, *de testamento Dni Will. de Traci quandum Rectoris de Mortho*. Vol. 2, page 82.

Other writers state, that all the murderers retired to Knaresborough in Yorkshire, where

they remained some time, and then fled to Rome being admitted to penance by Pope Alex. the third.

Another account asserts that they ended their days at Jerusalem, and were buried without the church door belonging to the Templars.

On the other hand, Camden informs us, Sir William Tracye, twenty-three years after the murder of Thomas-a-Becket, retired to Morte, "contrary to what the vulgar chronicles say, that all who were concerned in that murder died miserably in three years after." And Risdon adds, "In this remote place," (Morte,) "Sir William Tracy, son of Oliver, Lord Tracy, lived a private life, after he with others, had slain Thomas-a-Becket, Arch-bishop of Canterbury in HENRY the second's time. The punishment of a priest-killer was not then death of body by execution, but of the soul by excommunication, until about the twenty-third year of that king's reign, when it was yielded, that such persons should also suffer loss of life. Certain it is, he withdrew himself hither; here he spent the remainder of his life and lieth buried in an aisle of this Church, by him built, under an erected monument with his portraiture engraven on a gray marble stone, with the

fragment of a French inscription in ancient characters.”* The author of ‘Magna Britannia’ records almost the same words.

In ‘Dugdale’s Baronage,’ it is stated, “contemporary with the 1st Oliver, was also William de Traci, which William, in 12th HENRY the 2nd, on the marriage of the King’s daughter, certified that he held 26 Knight’s fees, and two eighth parts; for which, in 14th Henry the 2nd, he paid £17 10s. This William de Traci was one of the murderers of Thomas-a-Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1170, (15. H. 2); and in 19th Henry the 2nd had title of steward of Normandy, (*id est*, Justice of Normandy) but held it not much more than two years longer.† “Richard, Bishop of Winchester, being substituted to that office.”

Amid these conflicting statements, it would be unwise to draw any absolute conclusion. That a Sir William de Tracy, Rector of Morthoe, lived, and most probably died there

* See page 44.

† Polwhele says, which is supported by Pole, “that Sir William de Tracy left an only daughter, married to Sir Gervaise Courtney, by whom he had issue William, which took the name of Tracy, from whom descended Henry, Lord Tracy, Baron of Barnstaple,” who resided at Tawstock in Edward the first’s time.

in 1322, admits of no doubt; but from the style of the upper marble slab, agreeing with the period of Becket's murder, it is reasonable to suspect that part of the tomb, at least, belonged to Sir William de Tracy, knight, and not to the Sir William, rector of Morthoe; and to account for the effigy being in full canonicals, it is probable he assumed the habit and character of a monk, or lay-religious, devoting the remainder of his life to God, hoping to atone for his past sins, which is said was the case with his companions, one of whom built the abbey of Beau-chief, in Derbyshire, which he dedicated to St. Thomas-a-Becket,* and a chantry was erected near Barnstaple Bridge,† and consecrated to the same saint.

* A descendent of Richard Breto, or Brett, one of the murderers of Thomas-a-Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, (and a member of whose family, Roger Brito, gave the manor of Upcott to the Priory of Saint Augustine, in Taunton), afterwards resided at Pillond, situate in the parish of Pilton, having become possessed of that inheritance by the marriage of Robert Brett, with the heiress of William de Pillond, in Edward the fourth's time.

† Where Mrs. Carter's (late Mr. Robert's) house now stands; but when it was built, or by whom, is unknown, although it is said to have been built by Sir William de Tracy, one of the prelate's assassins, in expiation of his crime.

I here close my observations on this subject, leaving to other, and better judges, the task of pointing out any errors into which I may have fallen.

The name of this place is probably derived from the French *mort* (death), and *hoe* meaning high ground, which rises from a well known rock,* projecting far into the sea, to the north of the bay, called "Morte-stone;" a place where death has spread his sable covering over many an unfortunate mariner.

On Morte-point, just at the brow of the declivity, half concealed by briars, is a Crwm-lech, an ancient Druidical monument, consisting of a rude slab laid on two perpendicular ones.

The view from the end of the village, over Woollacombe-sands, bounded by Baggy-point, with the long promontory of Hartland-point on the horizon, is unusually fine.

BARRICANE.

A short distance below the village is a cove, called Barricane. This place is frequently

* An absurd tradition exists respecting this rock, to the extent that it can only be removed by a number of those wives who have a sovereignty over their husbands.

selected for excursions from Ilfracombe, during the summer months ; not only on account of the beauty of the scenery, but also for the purpose of collecting shells, which are washed on shore there in great abundance.

WOOLLACOMBE SANDS.

Half-a-mile beyond Barricane are Woollacombe-sands,* so called from the possessor's name, in whose family it remained from the reign of King JOHN, when it was purchased by the family of the present possessor, Sir Bruce Chichester, Baronet, of Arlington Court. The sands are firm and hard ; they extend about two miles, and terminate at the southern boundary of Morte-bay, called Baggy-point.

There is something peculiarly pleasing in the survey of these delightful sands, which adds much to the pleasure a walk or ride over them affords. On approaching this magnificent view there appears, upon the right, a long range of rocks, whose rugged summits seem to bid defiance to the billows as they proudly dash over

* There is a tradition existing that two sons of one of the Tracys, of Woollacombe Tracy, fought a duel on Woollacombe-sands, about a damsel saved from shipwreck, and brought up by their father.

them ; whilst the lengthened beach, on the left, receiving wave after wave, as they follow in quick succession, adds to the interest of the scene, and the pure and salubrious sea breeze invigorates the frame and diffuses health around.

On the Sands are to be found many specimens of *Macra*, *Natica*, and other shells ; they are only to be procured alive by digging for them where the tide has recently receded. Multitudes of *Helix virgata* and *Bulimus acutus*, generally dead, lie scattered about among the burrows and loose sand, but may be found alive on the herbage above.

Should the ride not be considered too long, from near the end of Woollacombe-sands, pursue a road to the left, leading to Braunton, through the village of Georgeham. Although the former place possesses, in itself, nothing particularly attractive, its neighbourhood is highly interesting ; and the ride from thence, over Heanton-hill, or on the new and level road by the river Taw, to Barnstaple, is in many instances beautiful.

A new road has lately been made from Ilfracombe to Braunton, and from thence to Barnstaple. The road is sheltered, and some of the scenery picturesque.

BRAUNTON.

Braunton, or Branockstond, is so called from St. Branock, a son of the king of Calabria, who is said to have arrived there in the reign of Malgo Coname, King of the Britains, A. D. 300. He preached and extended the christian religion in the neighbourhood. In Edward the Confessor's days, this town and manor were the king's demesne. After the conquest, William Warlewast, a celebrated counsellor and chaplain to the Conqueror, and his two sons procured a settlement of the principal manor, on the church of St. Peter, in Exeter. RICHARD the first gave considerable possessions, in this parish, to Odo de Cario, progenitor of the various families of Carew, in this country. The church is well worthy of notice, and a visit to it would be amply recompensed. There is a marked distinction between the chancel and nave; and the noble roof, (the span of which is 34 feet,) is extremely striking, and perhaps the widest in that part of Devonshire. The sittings are generally open, and the seat-ends of beautifully carved oak; a style generally practised in earlier

days, and has of late years been again adopted. The chancel, the wall of the nave, and the tower are of the style called early English. The windows (overlooking of course, modern deformities) are of the perpendicular order, with the exception of the beautiful chancel window which is also early English. The west window was restored about seven years since, by a country stone-mason. The carved ends of the seats are adorned with emblems of our Lord's passion, as at Morthoe, but they are far better preserved. There are also figures of the apostles, and shields, containing arms and other devices. On one of the bosses in the pannel work of the roof, is carved a sow with a litter of pigs, in allusion to the singular tradition, that St. Branock was directed by a dream, to build a church wherever he should find a pig with young ones, which he afterwards did on the site of the present building.

A short distance below Braunton, lying on the coast, are some extensive sand-hills, called Braunton Burrows, its situation is so exposed to the westerly winds, that some hundred acres have, in times past, been overwhelmed by the sand. As an instance of its altered state, more than a century since, a considerable body of sand having

been undermined by husbandmen (who use it for the purpose of manure) it fell in, and discovered the top of a tree, which on examination, was found to be 30 feet in length; a circumstance clearly proving that this extensive tract, now a rabbit warren, was once richly stored with timber of considerable growth.

Beyond the Braunton Burrows, are Santon Sands, extending three or four miles, in length, and partaking of the beauty and interest of those before mentioned, with the addition of their being longer and wider. On these sands may be found the best shells in the neighbourhood, and other objects of interest; and they are frequented by a variety of rare birds.

Not far from the Light-house are the walls of an old building, called St. Ann's Chapel.

In this parish is Lobb Phillip, an estate which was demised in 1715, by the Rev. John Newte, Rector of the Tidcombe portion of Tiverton parish, to the masters and fellows of Balliol College, Oxford, in trust, to apply the annual profits in an exhibition, on a scholar, to be chosen out of Blundell's Grammar School, in Tiverton, by the three rectors of that town, or ny two of them; the scholar to receive the benefit for seven years, if he continues a member of the college.

Return from Braunton, by Westdown, to Ilfracombe.

In the north transept of the parish church of Westdown, is a very good decorated window, gable-end, and buttresses.

BERRYNARBOR.

Berrynarbor, so called from having long remained in the possession of an ancient family called de Biry ; the road to which is hilly, but the views from it are, in many instances, extremely fine ; it passes through the hamlet of Hele, before mentioned ; about a mile from which is the entrance to Watermouth, forming the carriage road to that place. The view, on approaching Berrynarbor, is one of great interest, and the church, which bears every appearance of antiquity, adds much to it. Near it is the old manor house, formerly belonging to the de Birys, but now converted into a farmhouse. Its exterior is ornamented with several shields, bearing the arms of Plantagenet, Bonville, and other persons of distinction.

At the extremity of the parish is a farm called Bowden, celebrated as having been the birth place of John Jewel, bishop of Salisbury,

in the year 1522, where his family had resided many generations.

COMBMARTIN.

Five miles from Ilfracombe, in following this road, is Combmartin, anciently Martinscombe; "the first part of which name," observes Camden, "flows from the British *Kum*, a valley;" and the second from Martin de Tours, a Norman lord, who had great possessions there, in the reign of HENRY the First.* This powerful family (afterwards created barons of Barnstaple, Dartington, and Camvis in Wales) "procured this town to be made a borough, with the privileges of waifs, estrays, wrecks, felons' goods, assize of bread, and ale, and pillory; with a market on Thursday and a fair on Whitsun-monday."†

"A little river, called the Humber, cleareth it throughout, making at the town's-end, a poor haven." If only a moderate sum, however, were to be laid out, it might be made a good harbour.

* Martin de Tours had a sister called Conceia, or Conches, wife of Calfulnius or Calprunius. Presbyter Britannus, and said to be the mother of St. Patrick.

† Westcote's Devonshire, page 253.

From the Martins this manor reverted to the crown, and RICHARD the 2nd gave it to his favourite, Robert de Vere, 4th Earl of Oxford, of that name. It returned again to the crown, and HENRY the 8th gave it to Sir Richard Pollard, who sold it to Hancock; from whose family it passed, by marriage, to the late Admiral Watson, and is now the property of his descendant, Sir Charles W. Watson, bart., of Wratting Park, Cambridgeshire.

The town of Combmartin consists of a long irregular street, extending nearly a mile from the sea, which is approached by a winding road, having a few picturesque cottages near the beach, which add to its romantic appearance. The church is remarkably handsome: the chancel is built in the early English style; the remainder of the church and the tower are perpendicular. The outline of the northern elevation, with its ancient battlements, is good, and the tower ranks among the best in the neighbourhood. The church is cruciform, and consists of a chancel, a chancel aisle or chantry, a nave and north aisle, and north and south transepts; having at the west end of the nave a square-topped, battlemented tower of four stages, surmounted by crocketed pinnacles

with crosses for finials : the tower is 98 feet in height to the battlements, and 115 to the top of the pinnacles : the buttresses are very striking and project considerably from the tower, adding greatly to its appearance and strength : they are ornamented in the third stage with canopied niches, but the figures are gone from many of them. A screen divides the chancel from the nave ; the carved work of the upper portion of the screen has been removed and white plaster put in its room ; the lower part is ornamented with a series of feathered panellings containing paintings of our Lord and the Apostles. There are remains of tabernacle work in the pier adjoining the screen, which enclose two niches without figures : this work is now much defaced, but in its once rich colouring of gilt and purple, it must have been very handsome. A small stone staircase in the wall of the south transept, by which the rood-loft was approached, is still in existence. The chancel is separated from the chantry by a very elegant piece of open screen work, designated a *parlouse* : the style corresponds with the windows of the church, the upper portion is very richly carved on both sides. The chantry retains the old open seats

with carved ends—some of the ornaments of the seats are very curious. The font stands near the principal doorway and is very large and ancient. On the north side of the chantry is a mural monument, to the memory of Judith Ivatt, formerly wife of William Hancock, lord of the manor of Combmartin, and afterwards wife of Thomas Ivatt (sometime his Majesty's principal searcher in the port of London), who departed this life 1637, with her effigy the size of life, most exquisitely and elaborately sculptured in white marble: she is represented in the dress of that period, covered with point lace, and looped with knots of ribbon, with a pearl necklace, and her hair in curls; she bears some resemblance to the lovely Henrietta Maria, Queen of CHARLES the first. This church, with its quiet yard sheltered and over-hung by drooping wych-elms, and locality merit a visit from every admirer of ecclesiastical architecture and scenery; and Ivatt's monument alone will requite a journey to the admirers of art. The Rectory-house stands in a beautiful position, on an ascent from the church, and has been recently built in the gothic style.

The bay is a point of much attraction, from the beautiful scenery that surrounds it, and

every object appears formed to give the happiest effect.*

Silver, tin, and lead mines were discovered there in the reign of EDWARD the first, at which period 337 men were brought from the Peak of Derbyshire to work them ;—" and we find from accounts, now extant in the tower of London, that in the 22nd year of that reign, William Wymondham accounted for 270lbs. weight of silver, forged for Lady Eleanor, Duchess of Barr, and daughter of EDWARD the first, and he was fined 251lbs. 10 penny-weight. On the 23rd, of the same reign, 522lbs. 10 penny-weight. In the 24th year was brought to London, in finest silver in wedges, 704lbs. 3 penny-weight ; and the next year 260 miners were pressed out of the Peak and Wales, and great was the profit in silver and lead." In the reign of EDWARD the 3rd, the produce of these mines went far towards defraying the expense of his war with France. They were also worked

* "Near Combmartin is the hanging stone, one of the bound stones which parts Combmartin from the next parish. It received this name from a thief, who, having stolen a sheep and tied it about his neck to carry it on his back, rested himself for a time upon this stone, which is about a foot high, until the sheep struggling, slid over the stone on the other side, and strangled the man."—

Fuller's Worthies.

during the time of HENRY the 5th; but from that period they appear to have been neglected until the reign of ELIZABETH, when a new lode was discovered, in the land of Mr. Richard Roberts, by Adrian Gilbert, Esq., which was afterwards worked by Sir Beavis Bulmer, knt., whose skilful management caused them to yield considerable revenue. By Camden we are informed that Queen ELIZABETH presented two silver cups, made from the metal here produced, one to William Bouchier, Earl of Bath (to whom this manor belonged, having inherited it from the Lords Martin, barons of Barnstaple); and another to Sir R. Martin, Knight, Lord Mayor of London, with inscriptions bearing date 1593. The latter one is used annually at the inauguration of the Lord Mayor.*

The inscriptions were as follow:—on that presented to the Earl of Bath:—

* “The same gentleman (Beavis Bulmer), on the 18th of October, gave unto Sir Richard Martin, then Lord Mayor of the cittie of London, and to the cittie for ever, one cup of silver, with a cover, weighing 137 ounces of fine better than the sterling; the silver of which cuppe, with other, was by his means digged out of the mine in England (Combmartin), in the month of August last, before passed, thirty-sixth of Elizabeth.”—

See Stow., p. 768.

“ In Martyn’s Combe long lay I hydd,
 Obscured, deprest with grossest soyle,
 Debased much with mixed lead,
 Till Bulmer came ; whose skille and toyle
 Refined me so pure and cleene,
 As rycher no where els is scene.
 And addinge yet a farder grace,
 By fashion he dyd inable
 Mee worthy for to take a place,
 Or serve at any Prince’s table.
 Combe Martyn gave the use alone,
 Bulmer the fyning and fashion.”

On the one at present used in the city of London :—

“ When water workes in broken wharfes,
 At first erected were,
 And Beavis Bulmer, with his arte,
 The waters ’gan to reare ;
 Dispersed I in the earth dyd lye,
 Since alle beginninge olde,
 In place called Combe, where Martin longe
 Had hyd mee in his molde,
 I dydd no service on the earthe,
 And no manne set mee free,
 Till Bulmer, by his skille and change,
 Did frame mee this to bee.”

These mines were again opened in 1813, and worked four years, which produced a total of

two hundred and eighty tons of ore, shipped for Bristol.

Vancouver has observed that between 1796 and 1802, nine thousand two hundred and ninety-three tons of rich iron ore were shipped from Combmartin to South Wales.

For the following interesting and authentic document, we are indebted to the kindness of Charles Webber, Esq., of Buckland House, near Braunton, who is in possession of the original letter, written in CHARLES' the first own hand, and addressed to one of his ancestors.

CHARLES R.

“Trusty and Welbeloued—We greet you well—We haue Receiued a faire Character of your Affections to our Welbeloued Seruant Thomas Bushell, Esq. and of your seruicable Endeauors for aduancing his further discouery of the Mynes att Cummartin, in order to the publiſh Good, and haueing had a sight of the Oare, which we conceiue lyes there in uast proportions, according to the Testimony of Ancient Records in that behalfe—We haue thought fitt, not only, to let you know that We shall esteem it an acceptable Service if by pursuance of your first principles you add to his encouragements but alsoe by an Act of Grace that may reward you or your posterity readily

make good the same—Soe not doubting your Chearfull Compliance with him in all things tending to y^e aduancement of soe good a Worke, We bid you farewell—Giuen under Our Sign Manuel at Court at Newport in y^e Isle of Wight this 29th day October in y^e 24th Year of Our Reigne 1648.

“ To our Trusty and Welbeloued subject Louis Incleton of Braunton in our County of Deuon Esq.”

This letter forms a sufficient proof that an idea existed of opening the mines again towards the close of CHARLES' the first unfortunate reign ; but there is no evidence of its having been carried into effect.

These mines were last re-opened in 1835, and three steam engines and other machinery erected by a company with a capital of £30,000, about half of which was expended before any important discovery was made, and the shafts were on the point of being abandoned, when a lode was found which offered a fair prospect of remuneration, but after three dividends had been paid, besides defraying the expences, about £500 a month, the lode became poor and the works were ultimately closed in 1848, which is a great loss to a poor and extensive population.



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